

# A MDO TIBETAN NAMING PRACTICES AND NAME POPULARITY

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## ABSTRACT

Names, name frequency, and naming practices in Brag dmar nang (Zhemeang) Village, Dkar brjid (Garang) Township, Khri ka (Guide) County, Mtsho lho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) Province, PR China and Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Khri ka County are presented and discussed. The literature on Tibetan naming practices in English, Chinese, and Tibetan is also reviewed.

## KEYWORDS

A mdo, Mtsho lho (Hainan), Mtsho sngon (Qinghai), Tibetan naming practices

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

When Mother (Shag rdo skyid b. 1964) was in her fifth month of pregnancy with me,<sup>2</sup> my paternal grandmother, Chos skyong mtsho (b. 1936), suggested that she visit Bya khyung Monastery<sup>3</sup> to worship and to obtain a name for me. Mother then walked with her aunt (Tshe ring skyid, b. 1930) and her sister (Rdo rje sgröl ma, b. 1954) to the monastery. They set off at about five a.m. from Brag dmar nang Village and, at about six in the evening, they reached the monastery where they stayed at a monk's quarters. The monk is a family friend and his living quarters are located about one kilometer south of the monastery's main temples and chanting hall. During their three day stay at the monastery, Mother circumambulated the entire monastery once in the company of her aunt and sister, and then visited Phag mo Temple, a small temple located about 200 meters southeast of the monastery's main hall.<sup>4</sup>

Mother made an offering of some butter lamps before Buddhist images there and gave a loaf of homemade bread and ten RMB to the *lkog gnyer*<sup>5</sup> as gifts. When she asked for a name for me, the *lkog gnyer* gave her a white piece of paper with two

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<sup>2</sup> All first person references designate the first author unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>3</sup> Bya khyung Monastery, founded in 1349 by Chos rje don grub rin chen (Shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring 2005), is located in the west of Tsha phug Township, Dpa' lung County.

<sup>4</sup> Chos skyong mtsho (b. 1938, female) and Tshe ring skyid (b. 1930), both of Brag dmar nang Village, describe Phag mo Temple in Bya khung Monastery:

Phag mo Temple is a small temple in Bya khung Monastery. Pregnant women often circumambulate and prostrate in front of this temple. Women who have difficulty becoming pregnant also visit Phag mo Temple with homemade bread and a small amount of cash, and beseech the deities for children. Also, if a woman really wants to have a son, she goes there to ask for a son. This really works sometimes.

<sup>5</sup> A monk who assists pilgrims as part of his monastery duties. Monks assume the role of *lkog gnyer* in turn.

names and a loaf of bread, and said, "Please call the child Rdo rje bkra shis if it is a boy, and Phag mo sgrol ma if it is a girl. Please place this bread in your family shrine until you give birth."

Before visiting Bya khyung Monastery, Shag rdo skyid also visited Uncle Dge 'dun and asked him what rituals should be done to ensure a successful birth. Uncle Dge 'dun told her that if she chanted *Sgra dbyangs*<sup>6</sup> she would give birth to a boy. Mother did this.

This is how I got my name.

What are prevalent A mdo Tibetan names? How are names obtained? How, when, and why are names changed? What are the characteristics of male and female names in A mdo? This paper attempts to answer these questions.

I chose two locations for name collection. One was my natal village - Brag dmar nang - located in Dkar brjid (Garang) Township, Khri ka County, Mtsho lho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture,<sup>7</sup> Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) Province, PR China. This village was chosen because I know the names of all the 233 villagers (110 male; 123 female).<sup>8</sup> This also allowed for a focused examination of one particular community. The economics of the village are complex, with ongoing agriculture, animal husbandry, and outside employment, in addition to state-sponsored modern education.

In 2014, the village was home to about fifty-one households whose members were all classified as Tibetan. Brag dmar nang was an agro-pastoral village, with every household owning sheep, goats, mules, donkeys, and cows. However, with the availability of paid employment outside the village, only five village families kept livestock in 2014. Wheat, rape (canola), potatoes, a small amount of

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<sup>6</sup> *Sgra dbyangs* refers to *Sgra dbyangs rgyal po'i mtshan*, a Buddhist scripture. 'Phrin las, a monk at Seng khri Monastery, 'Ba' County, Mtsho lho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Mtsho sngon Province advised chanting this scripture helped women avoid miscarriage and give birth successfully.

<sup>7</sup> The counties in Mtsho lho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture are Gser chen (Gonghe), 'Ba' (Tongde), Brag dkar (Xinghai), Mang ra (Guinan), and Khri ka.

<sup>8</sup> At the time of this survey (2012), the youngest male villager was born in 2012 and the oldest was born in 1930.

barley, and some vegetables are cultivated on approximately thirty-three hectares of irrigated land.<sup>9</sup> This community has also been described in Rdo rje bkra shis et al. (2012) and Tshe dpal rdo rje et al. (2009).

The second site for name collection was Mtsho lho (Hainan) Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Khri ka County. For all students at the school, I collected names (in Chinese, according to the official school list), sex, birthdates, and ethnicity (all were Tibetan). Students were then asked to write their names and home areas in Tibetan. Altogether 1,468 students (673 female; 795 male) were surveyed.<sup>10</sup> About eighty percent of the surveyed students were from Khri ka County. The other twenty percent were from other counties in Mtsho lho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

I collected data for this paper from both the school and the village. In addition, I interviewed thirty-three students at the school in the teachers' office asking each, "How did you get your name?" and "Do you have any stories to explain your name?"<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, I chatted with thirteen Brag dmar nang villagers, most of whom visited my home for reasons unrelated to this paper, and informally asked them the two questions just mentioned. The research was completed in late 2013.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on Tibetan naming practices and name popularity is scant, especially in English. For this reason, we offer summaries of the literature we found, particularly for the Chinese and Tibetan language

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<sup>9</sup> Non-irrigated land is not cultivated.

<sup>10</sup> The youngest male student was born in 1998 and the oldest in 1988. The youngest female student was born in 1999 and the oldest in 1990.

<sup>11</sup> When I was collecting the names from Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, some syllables of the names collected were spelled differently, e.g., *grub*/*'grub*, *skal bzang*/*bskal bzang*, *'phags/phag*, *'tsho*/*mtsho*, and so on. I standardized spellings and used them to analyze the data. For instance, I used *grub* for all *'grub*, and *mtsho* for all *'tsho*.

materials. With the exception of Basang (2010) and Childs (2003), none of the authors we review explain how they collected the data and sources of their data.

I begin with Childs (2003), who discusses naming practices and name popularity in sKyid grong by focusing on a list dating to 1958 of 2,844 government taxpayers in sKyid grong, "a district-level administrative unit (*rdzong* [county]) in Tibet" (17). Though descriptive of a community in western Tibet, Childs' data is useful as a reference point for Amdo studies. How children and people in general in sKyid grong composed their names including nicknames is discussed with illustrative examples. Childs notes that (19):

...Tshe ring was by far the most common name in sKyid grong with 299 individuals - more than 10 percent of the entire population - having this as either their first or second name. Nyi ma and Zla ba had the distinction of being the most popular first names. bsTan 'dzin was not a very frequent name in sKyid grong during the early part of the 20th century, in contrast to the current situation among the exile population.

In terms of frequency of name prefix and suffix by gender, Childs writes (20):

...some names (Nor bu, Tshe dbang, and rDo rje) could be given to females, but were usually reserved for males. Also, some names are gender neutral when used as first names yet more gender specific when given as second names. Tshe ring, bSod nams, bKra shis, Tshe brtan, and bsTan 'dzin are gender neutral as first names but are used almost exclusively for males as second names, whereas Phur bu is used as a second name only for females. ...some names are used frequently as first names but rarely occur as second names (bSod nams, Blo bzang, bsTan 'dzin, bKra shis, and all the day-names except for Phur bu), while others are almost always used as second names (Don grub for males, sGrol ma and Bu khrid for females being the most striking examples).

Childs suggests that unusual entries in the name list are possibly nicknames, noting that nicknames are common and based on physical attributes, intellectual aptitude, and mental abilities, e.g., *nag mdog* 'black colored', *mgo ril* 'round head', *blun po* 'fool', *tha shal* 'bad' 'inferior', and *lkugs pa* 'mute' 'deaf'. Childs notes that nicknames might not state a negative attribute, but be applied in jest. Childs does not provide accounts of naming practices of monks and nuns, nor does he discuss Tibetan surnames.

Based on my information, nicknames in Brag dmar nang Village are used in two contexts. *Gces ming* is a name frequently used for children and friends to express kindness and affection. In contrast, a *mtshang ming* name is used to mock friends and others by basing it on their physical attributes and personality. *Mtshang ming* are more frequently used among children than adults and are particularly common among peers.

*Kho* and *phrug* are common second syllables used in *gces ming*, regardless of name length. For example, Rdo rje mtsho, is a female name, and a common *gces ming* for this name is Rdo phrug. Similarly, Rdo kho is the *gces ming* of the male name, Rdo rje bkra shis. Tshe kho is the *gces ming* of the female name, Tshe ring mtsho. In this case, *kho* and *phrug*, do not signify gender differences as they apply to both male and female *gces ming*. The first two syllables of a name (regardless of name length) represent *gces ming* in Brag dmar nang Village, e.g., 'Brug rgyal is *gces ming* for 'Brug rgyal tshe ring, Tshe gzungs, is *gces ming* for Tshe gzungs skyid, and so on. Other diminutives include using the first and third syllable of a name (regardless of name length), e.g., Rdo bkra for Rdo rje bkra shis, and Phag skyid for Phag mo skyid.

Different categories were identified by the author in the course of field research in A mdo. Almost every Brag dmar nang villager has a *mtshang ming*. For example, Rna rko 'flat nose', Kha stug 'thick mouth', Dmar rdo 'red cheeks', and so on. Examples of *mtshang ming* signifying personality include a villager called Feiji (Chinese for 'airplane') because he constantly fidgeted when he was a youth. Another villager is called Spyang ki 'wolf' as the result of his persistent tendency to obtain the most benefit from whatever activity

he was engaged in. A *mtshang ming* is sometimes used regardless of physical characteristics and personality. For example, as described above, a female villager called Rna rko (*mtshang ming*) has the formal name 'Phag mo mtsho'. If another female child were born in the village and was named Phag mo mtsho, that child would then be called Rna rko (her *mtshang ming*).

### Chinese Language Literature

Comments on Tibetan naming practices in Chinese language literature include Qu (1982), Daola (1984), Li (1987), Danzhengjia (1994), Jia (1994), Ga Dawacairang (1996), Gama Jiangcun (1998), Basang (2010), Gazangzhuoma (2008), He (2009), and Nong (2013). These are brief papers ranging from two to six pages in length. Danzhengjia (1994), Jia (1994), Ga Dawacairang (1996), Gazangzhuoma (2008), He (2009), and Nong (2013) give a few references - the others do not.

Li (1987), Danzhengjia (1994), Jia (1994), Ga Dawacairang (1996), Gama Jiangcun (1998), Basang (2010), Gazangzhuoma (2008), He (2009), and Nong (2013) mention naming practices based on religious terms, birthdates, natural objects, hopes for the child's future life, and the hope that the mother would have no more children. Gazangzhuoma (2008), for example, writes that Meiduo (Me tog) 'flower', and Dahai ('Rgya mtsho) 'ocean' are given based on natural objects; Duo jie (Rdo rje) 'vajra', and Zhuoma (Sgrol ma) 'Tara' are given based on religious terms; Cairang (Tshe ring) 'long life' and Xingfu (Bde skyid) 'happiness' are given based on hopes for the child's future life; Canmujue (Mtshams gcod) 'stop', is given based on the hope that this is the last child for the mother; and Chuoyi (Tshe gcig) 'first', and Xingqier (Gza' mig dmar) 'Tuesday' are names based on birthdates.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Names are given as provided by the authors and depend on the language the authors employed, i.e., Tibetan or Chinese. Names given in Chinese are followed by Pinyin and Wylie equivalents.

He (2009) adds that Xingqiliu (Gza' spen pa) 'Saturday', Chuba (Tshe brgyad) 'eighth', and Guoqing 'National Day' are given based on birthdates. He states that parents whose other children are all females, and who wished to have a male, name the last female child Puchi (Bu khrid) 'lead to a boy' 'bring a boy'. If children died at a young age, and their parents wish to avoid accidents for a child, Puke (Bu gog) 'ugly child' might be given as a name. He further writes that when a child is seriously ill, parents name it Xiluo (Shi log) 'be dead and come back' in order to escape such suffering. Naming practices including nicknames of lay people, monks, and nuns are briefly mentioned with content very similar to Daola (1984).

Nong (2003) writes that rich families used clan and manor names as surnames to show their high family status. He notes that class and privilege are evident in Tibetan surnames in the past; only high-ranking officials and reincarnate *bla ma* had surnames while ordinary people did not. Although not stated, I assume this refers to the ancient clans in central Tibet. Nong claims that Tibetans take their children to monasteries and temples and ask a *bla ma* to name them. However, some parents whose poverty did not allow them to consult a *bla ma* named their children by themselves, or asked relatives and prestigious villagers for names. Nong provides examples of naming practices based on hopes for a child's future life and the wish that there be no further births, e.g., Ciren (Tshe ring) 'long life' and Qimei ('Chi med) 'no death'; and Cang mu jue (Mtshams gcod) 'stop' and Qiongda (Chog thal) 'enough'. Nong further notes that poverty and poor hygiene meant that children often died, an event that parents attributed to ghosts. In such cases, Qijia (Khyi skyag) 'dog shit', and Qizhu (Khyi phrug) 'puppy' might have been given in the hope the child would have a long, good life.

Nong also states that new naming practices resulted from the Chinese Revolution, for example, Jinzhu (Bcings grol) 'liberation', Dama (Dar dmar) 'red flag', Dejimeiduo (Bde skyid me tog) 'happy flower', Sajinima (Gsar brje nyi ma) 'revolutionary sun', and Jinzhumeiduo (Bcings grol me tog) 'liberation flower'. Illustrations are also given of how numbers, age differences, physical attributes (cripple, big head), vocations (doctor, carpenter), and gender were



used in names. While naming practices in terms of the number of name syllables and gender are briefly mentioned, no information is given on the specific location of the study, and when and how the data were collected.

Qu (1982) argues that Tibetans historically did not have surnames. Instead, they put tribal names, and the names of chieftains and landowners in front of their names (given names) as their surnames. Furthermore, names of Tibetan children attending Chinese schools were transliterated into Chinese characters by teachers. Such students then gradually used the first character of this name as a surname. Some Tibetans put Chinese surnames in front of their names as their own surnames.

While this may be the case, the Mongghul (Monguor, Tu) scholar Limusishiden (personal communication),<sup>13</sup> describes how certain Mongghul living in Huzhu Mongghul (Tu) Autonomous County in Mtsho sngon Province acquired their Chinese surnames:

One family received their surname, Fu, from an official work team during the Great Leap Forward in 1958. This team visited the village and asked the family what their family was called in Mongghul. When they were told Bayan Kun 'Rich Man', they were designated as the Fu 'rich' family. Similarly, a family in Shgeayili Village, Donggou Township derived their surname, Niu, when an official work team came to the village and saw a person from the family herding cattle, then gave the surname Niu 'cattle'.

Did Tibetans acquire Chinese surnames in similar fashion? This question deserves further research. Some Amdo Tibetan families appear to have had Chinese surnames for a long while. For example, Stobs stag lha (2013:38) reports on the Ma families from Ledu County in Mtsho sngon Province who fled to Chu cha Village in about 1945 to escape Ma Bufang's oppressive rule. They had the Ma surname before arrival and were unable to explain its origin.

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<sup>13</sup> Email on 7 October 2015.

In addition Qu states that it is easy for those who understand Tibetan culture and tradition to distinguish Tibetan names for lay people, monks, and nuns, and by gender. This is, however, debatable. For example, based on my experiences and observations, Pa sangs and Zla ba are frequently used by both females and males. Zla ba, for example, is the name of a female in Zhi'u (Xiewu) Township, Khri 'du (Chenduo) County, Yul shul Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and also the name of a male in Dkar brjid Township, Khri ka County, both of whom I know. In terms of female names, Qu writes that, Wangmu (Dbang mo), Lamu (Lha mo), Zhuoma (Sgrol ma), and Yangjin (Dbyangs can) are only female names, with the majority of female names featuring such suffixes as mu (mo), ji (skyid), cuo (mtsho), ma (ma), and xian (byams).

Li's (1987) general comments about Tibetan names include how naming practices changed after Liberation, and how Tibetans acquired Chinese names. Li (1987) writes that some children were named Gongchantai where Gongchan (Chinese) signifies 'communist' + tai (thar), a common suffix syllable of Tibetan male names. Another example is Wengecairang where Wenge (Chinese) refers to the 'Cultural Revolution' and Cairaing (Tshe ring) means 'long life' in Tibetan. Such naming practices, Li writes, reveal Tibetan attitudes of devotion toward communism and socialism. Li (1987) also notes that some children who were born during the Cultural Revolution were named Zhandou 'battle', Weidong 'Safeguard Chair Mao', and so on.

Danzhengjia (1994) introduces Tibetan surnames and their origins, and posits four great Tibetan surnames – Se (Bse), Mu (Rmu), Dong (Ldong), and Dong (Stong). He also discusses tribal names, place names, marriage and its relationship to surnames, how poor families without surnames acquired surnames, and the names of religious figures. Danzhengjia emphasizes the important role of Buddhism in Tibetan naming practices and name popularity. Focusing on the names of laypeople and monks, he states that, regardless of location, Buddhist terms are frequently associated with Tibetan naming practices, for instance, Zhuoma (Sgrol ma), Jiayang ('Jam dbyangs), and so on. Danzhengjia also briefly discusses naming practices in terms of gender.

Danzhengjia (1994) mentions how certain names indicate places of origin, e.g., regional variation in mountain deities, key monasteries, and *srung ma* 'protective goddesses', e.g., Hedong (Rma shar), Hexi (Rma nub), and Heyin residents of Khri ka County venerate the Wenchang (Bun khrang) Temple in Khri ka County Town. Consequently, they have names such as Wenchangtai (Bun khrang thar), Wenchangjia (Bun khrang rgyal), Wenchangji (Bun khrang skyid), and Wenchangzhuoma (Bun khrang sgrol ma). In another example, he notes that certain people from Tongren (Reb gong), Rma lho Prefecture are named Xiawucairang (Sha bo tshe ring), Xiawudongzhu (Sha bo don grub), Xiawuji (Sha bo skyid), and Xiawuzhuoma (Sha bo sgrol ma), owing to the locally venerated Xiawu (Sha bo) Mountain Deity. Similarly, in Hualong (Dpa' lung) Hui Autonomous County, people are named Lijiatai (Klu rgyal thar) and Ljiacairang (Klu rgyal tshe ring) because of Lijia (Klu rgyal), a deity in Dandou (Dan tig) Monastery<sup>14</sup> in Dpa' lung County.

In terms of gender patterns, Danzhengjia (1994) reports that *cuo* (mtsho), *ji* (skyid), and *mao* (mo) are common syllables in girls' names. How male names and female names are composed is mentioned, including nicknaming practices. Naming practices for monks are also briefly discussed. Details of name popularity and how data were collected are not given.

Ga Dawacairang (1996) comments on the historical development of Tibetan naming practices (irrespective of region), how names were composed, and their cultural meaning and significance. In terms of gender, he claims that most female names consist of suffixes - Sgrol ma, Mtsho mo, Lha mo, Bzang mo, and Dpal mo - while most male names are composed of Tshe ring, Dgra 'dul, Lhun grub, and Don grub. He omits discussion of name popularity, and how and where data were collected.

Gama Jiangcun (1998) discusses Tibetan naming practices in the context of historical development, Tibetan Buddhism, and how

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<sup>14</sup> Dan tig Monastery, founded in 911 (<http://tinyurl.com/q9orzkd>, accessed 6 October 2015), is located in the contemporary Dpa' lung Hui Autonomous County, Mtsho sngon Province. For more on this monastery, see 'Jigs med mkhas grub (2013) and Shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring (2005).

Tibetan *rus* 'surnames', a reference to patrilineage, are composed. The author focuses on naming practices of children and associated cultural connotations. The author also mentions naming practices for monks and nuns. Detailed accounts and name popularity are not mentioned.

Basang (2010) focused on 2,286 Tibetan student<sup>15</sup> names collected at Lha sa Teacher's Nationalities School from 2007 to 2009, and concluded that, according to the frequency of names in accordance with the number of syllables and gender, female names commonly employ such suffixes as *mu* (mo), *zong* ('dzoms), *yang* (g.yang), *ga* (dkar), *ma* (ma), *cuo* (mtsho), *zhen* (sgron), *la* (lha), and *ji* (skyid). The author notes that Tibetan names of four syllables reveal certain gender specificity, i.e., most male names feature two disyllabic components. Other names are composed of two syllables lacking gender specificity, for example *Baima* (Pad ma) and *Dawa* (Zla ba). Examples of typical male names, female names, and names that lack gender specificity are briefly mentioned.

Basang claims that in terms of name frequency by gender, male names account for forty percent, female names for forty percent, and gender neutral names comprise nineteen percent. He notes that in terms of gender and number of syllable components, seventy-seven percent of male names are composed of four syllables, twenty-three percent of two syllables while three syllable components comprise only 0.06 percent. Similarly, among female names, names of four syllable components account for seventy-three percent, those of two syllables twenty-three percent, while three-syllable components constitute four percent.

## Tibetan Language Literature

Ldong ka tshang dge shis chos grags et al. (2001), Shes rab bstan dar (2012), Gcod pa tshe ring (2012), and Dpal lha (2006) provide Tibetan language materials on Tibetan naming practices. There are a

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<sup>15</sup> Basang does not identify the location of the students' homes.

few additional works on Tibetan naming practices in the Tibetan language, but I could not locate them. They were published in the 1980s, and online resources of much such Tibetan literature are not yet easily accessible.

Ldong ka tshang dge shis chos grags et al. (2001) focus on Tibetan lineages. *Tibetan Histories Addenda et Corrigenda* (2010) criticizes this work for

its idea that Tibetan 'surnames' (an approximating translation for the word *gdung-rus* as used in this book) have always worked just like Chinese surnames, which is simply not the case.

Ldong ka tshang dge shis chos grags et al. (2001) discuss *rus* frequency during certain time periods in terms of syllable components, and claim, for example, that thirty-six Tibetan *rus* appeared from 1251 to 1351, among which eight *rus* (twenty-three percent) were composed of one single syllable, twenty-seven (seventy-five percent) were composed of two syllable components, and one *rus* (two percent) was composed of three syllable components. The list of Tibetan *rus* provided is only for historical figures such as emperors, queens, princes, administrators, officers, writers, and nobles.

The authors also mention *rus* of certain contemporary Tibetans and provide a list of *rus* of Tibetan writers, *bla ma*, teachers, and others. Khri ka Ban de tshe ring of Qinghai Medical College is given as an example with Khri ka explained as being the *rus* of Ban de tshe ring.

Shes rab bstan dar (2012) discusses 'tsho and mtsho, common suffix syllables of Tibetan female names. He suggests that, according to the works of ancient Tibetan scholars, mtsho is used as a suffix for female names while 'tsho is used for males and gives the examples Gangs dkar mtsho (female), Gangs dkar 'tsho (male), and such additional examples as Sgrol ma mtsho, Ye shes mtsho, Lha mo mtsho, and Bkra shis mtsho (female) and Sgrol ma rgya mtsho, Ye shes rgya mtsho, Lha mo rgya mtsho, and Bkra shis rgya mtsho

(male). He points out that *rgya* followed by the *mtsho* suffix is a male name.

Gcod pa tshe ring (2012) briefly introduces Tibetan *rus* origins and development. He states that Tibetans stopped using *rus* when Buddhism reached Tibet and religious names began to be used. Naming practices based on different schools of Tibetan Buddhism,<sup>16</sup> and Bon, and their significance are mentioned. Naming practices based on religious terms, *srung ma* 'protective divinities' 'guardian deities', birthdates, and home place are also noted with examples. Location of the study, and when and how the data were collected are not given.

Dpal lha (2006)<sup>17</sup> claims that Tibetan names originally derived from the four or six great *rus* - Bse, Rmu, Ldong, Stong (Sdong), Dbra, and 'Bru ('Dru). He describes the importance of maternal names in naming practices in early society and how the names of kings, queens, and officers relate to naming practices. Naming practices in terms of gender specificity and syllable components are mentioned only briefly. In terms of naming practices based on different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Dpal lha provides much the same content as Gcod pa tshe ring (2012).

As mentioned, most of the literature we reviewed consists of brief writings ranging from one to six pages in length that provides no information on how the data were collected, where, and when. In contrast, the research reported in the present paper was carried out in one specific Tibetan village - my natal village in Khri ka County, and in Mtsho lho (Hainan) Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Khri ka County. This allowed us to examine Tibetan naming practices, naming frequency and name popularity in one particular Tibetan region in A mdo.

We now shift from a broad introduction of naming in the bibliographic essay into the next section of the essay, which is a consideration of who give names and why, a numeric report based on field research, and the gendered nature of names.

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<sup>16</sup> They include Rnying ma, Sa skya, Dge lugs, and Bka' brgyud.

<sup>17</sup> Published in 1983 by *Tibetan Studies*.

## NAME GIVERS AND NAME CHANGES

To better understand who gave names, I interviewed thirty-three students and thirteen Brag dmar nang villagers. Seven students (four males, three females) from Mtsho lho (Hainan) Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School said that they did not know how they got their names. For example, Lha lo tshe ring (b. 1991, male) said, "I don't know how I got my name. I didn't ask my parents about this and they never told me." Similarly, the Brag dmar nang villager, Khe gri (b. 1978, male), said, "I don't know how I got my name."

Knowledge of the origin of a name may not be absent, but may be scant. For example, Rig 'dzin mtsho (b. 1993, student, female) said, "I'm sure my name was given by one of my family members, but I'm unsure who gave it to me. I've never really thought about it." And Brag dmar nang villager, Tshe ring skyid (b. 1930, female), Brag dmar nang Village confided, "I only know my name came from a monk at Sku 'bum<sup>18</sup> Monastery."

However, others I interviewed had more to say about how they obtained their names, though the depth of this knowledge varied. Rdo rje rgyal (b. 1992, student, male) reported that family members do not give names to their children in his village. To do so, they believe, would bring trouble:

My name was given by a *bla ma* from Hor rgyal Village, Chu nub County Town, Khri ka County. People in my village usually get names from Bya khyung and Kha sha mthil<sup>19</sup> Temple. I never heard a villager say that a name was given by their family members. Villagers believe that a name given by a family member will bring obstacles and difficulties.

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<sup>18</sup> Sku 'bum/ Sku 'bum byams pa gling is one of the largest Dge lugs monasteries in China. Located in Ru gсар, it is situated about twenty-six kilometers from the center of Zi ling City. Founded in 1583 by the third Dalai Lama, Bsod nams rgya mtsho, Sku 'bum is the birthplace of Tsong kha pa (1357-1419), founder of the Dge lugs Sect (Rdo rje bkra shis et al. 2012).

<sup>19</sup> Kha sha mthil is located about two kilometers north of Gshong gshan Township Town, Dpa' lung County, Mtsho shar Region. It was founded in about 1400 by 'Jam dbyangs, a monk from Lha sa (Shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring 2005).

This observation contrasts with other students in Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, who said male family members had named them. For example, Klu mo skyid (b. 1994, student, female) explained that her father gave her a name that combined both of her parents' names:

Father's name is Klu rgyal 'bum and Mother's name is Klu dkar skyid. Father named me Klu mo skyid because this name is composed of both his and Mother's names. Father put *mo* between *klu* and *skyid* because I am a girl. Father named one of my sister's Tshe dbang skyid. She was often sick. When a tantric monk from our village was consulted, he gave her a new name - Gu ru mtsho. Afterwards, she became healthy.

Bsod nams don grub (b. 1994, student, male) offers a similar story of a male family member giving a name based on his own name:

Grandfather (Pad ma bsod nams) gave me my name. He named several of my family members with half of his own name. For example, my brother is named Pad ma rdo rje and my sister's name is Bsod nams mtsho. Most people in my village name their children, however, if they become seriously sick, they visit a *bla ma* and change their name.

Dge 'dun mtsho (b. 1996, student, female), said:

My name was given by Mother's uncle, who is neither a monk nor a tantric practitioner. Most villagers give names to their own children, but if there are no grandparents living in the home, they generally consult an incarnate *bla ma* and ask for a name.

Chos mtsho sgrol ma (b. 1993, student, female) mentions that few families in her community name their children and also explains that her maternal grandparents named her:



My maternal grandparents in Mother's natal home in Gcan tsha County gave me my name. The majority of the people in my village ask a village *bla ma* or tantric practitioner for names for their children. A few families give names to their own children.

G.yang skyid mtsho (b. 1993, student, female) said, "My name was given by one of my uncles who is a village monastery monk." Similarly, Rdo rje phag mo (b. 1997, male) said:

My name was given by a village monk my family usually invites to chant at our home. My family visited this monk after I was born and asked for a name. Most villagers visit the local monastery to ask for names for children. A few families give names to their children.

*Sngags pa* 'tantric practitioners' are frequent name givers, as the following accounts demonstrate:

Lha mo mtsho (b. 1999, Brag dmar nang villager, female):

My father, Lha mchog skyabs, told me that seven days after I was born in my mother's home in Mi nyag Village, Dpa' lung County, my grandfather visited the tantric practitioner, Dbang ldan, who named me Lha mo mtsho.

Shag rdo skyid (b. 1964, Brag dmar nang villager, female):

Aunt told me that a well-known tantric practitioner called Gu ru tshe ring from Mi nyag Village, Dpa' lung County named me Shag rdo skyid. This tantric practitioner's grandmother was also named Shag rdo skyid. I was born in the same animal year<sup>20</sup> she was born in, so he gave me his grandmother's name.

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<sup>20</sup> This refers to the twelve year animal cycle: rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, bird, dog, pig, mouse, ox, and tiger.

Dpal mtsho skyid (b. 1999, Brag dmar nang villager, female):

My father, Khe gri, said that seven days after I was born, my family invited a local tantric monk, Dpal chen, to my home. He named me Dpal mtsho skyid. Dpal chen also said that it would be good for my future if I never ate aquatic animals and if an image of Gsang bdag was placed in the family's shrine.

Dpa' g.yang 'bum mtsho (b. 1995, student, female):

I don't know much about my name. Father said my name was given by a tantric practitioner from Lha khang thang Township, Khri ka County.

Khen thar sgrol ma (b. 1993, student, female):

My name was given by a village tantric practitioner. I don't know the details. Most villagers have names given by religious practitioners at Sku 'bum or Bya khyung monasteries.

Lcags thar tshe ring (b. 1993, student, male):

A well-known tantric practitioner from my village gave me my name. The year and time are important when giving a name, but I don't know much about it. Most people in my village go to Dkar brjid sngags khang<sup>21</sup> and ask the *bla ma* there to give a name for their children. Some parents name their own children, usually giving the same name as that of a grandparent.

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<sup>21</sup> Dkar brjid sngags khang/ Dkar brjid sngags khang rnam grol pad+ma gling is located in G.yam Village, Dkar brjid Township, Khri ka County. It was founded during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) (Shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring 2005).

Tshe mo rgyal (b. 1996, student, female):

My name was given by a tantric practitioner from my village. Most families in my village consult a *bla ma* or tantric practitioner for a name. A few families name their own children.

*Bla ma* and monks are also commonly consulted and asked to give names, as the following accounts show:

Stobs chen rgyal (b. 1994, student, male):

My name was given by a *bla ma*. He is still alive and from Bragdkar County. Most of my villagers go to a local incarnation *bla ma* and ask him for a name when a child is born.

G.yang skyid rgyal (b. 1993, student, female):

Uncle told me that my family asked for a name from a *bla ma* from Mang ra County before I was born. The *bla ma* said, "It's very good if the child is a male but, if the child is a girl, then give her a boy's name." G.yang skyid rgyal is the name the *bla ma* suggested.

Tshe ring rdo rje (b. 1991, student, male):

A *bla ma* from Mgo mang Township gave me my name. Most of my fellow villagers visit this *bla ma* for names. A few families name their own children.

Lcags byams tshe ring (b. 1991, student, male):

A *bla ma* from my village gave me my name. Villagers usually ask a local *bla ma* to name their children. No one in the village names their own children.

Phag mo skyid (b. 1994, student, female):

Mother told me that when she was pregnant, a *bla ma* from Bya khyung Monastery gave me my name. Most villagers usually go to local tantric practitioners and ask them to name their children.

Tshe brtan rgyal (b. 1995, student, male):

Sman sog Bla ma gave me my name. I don't know where he was from. My parents told me that the *bla ma* passed away when I was seven or eight years old.

Chos bzang sgrol ma (b. 1995, student, female):

About all I know is that a *bla ma* in Bya khyung Monastery gave me my name. Some families in my village consult someone in a monastery or a tantric practitioner, and others name their children.

Dpal skyid (b. 1996, student, female):

My parents told me that my name was given by a *bla ma* from Lha khang thang Township, Khri ka County. The majority of the villagers consult a *bla ma* from their own village.

Rdo rje bsam grub (b. 1996, student, male):

My parents told me that a *bla ma* gave me my name, but I don't know who that *bla ma* was or where he was from. Most villagers' names are given by their grandparents. A few families consult a *bla ma*.

Chos skyong mtsho (b. 1936, female, Brag dmar nang villager) said:

My name was given by Dkon mchog rgya mtsho, a monk from Upper Sde tsha Monastery.<sup>22</sup> When I became pregnant in my twenties, I visited Bya khyung Monastery to prostrate and circumambulate, hoping I would successfully give birth. A monk from Upper Sde tsha Monastery asked me to do this and assigned me the task of circumambulating and prostrating a billion times at Bya khyung Monastery. I was unable to successfully complete this task because I was too weak physically. I gave birth to a girl who, unfortunately, passed away when she was nine months old. She would probably still be alive if I had successfully completed the billion prostrations and circumambulations.

Phag mo skyid (b. 1999, Brag dmar nang villager, female):

Mother (Shag rdo skyid b. 1964) said that in the eighth lunar month when she was pregnant, she went to Bya khyung with other village women and asked the *lkog gnyer* for a name. He kindly gave her a white piece of paper with two names and said, "If it is a boy, call him Dgra 'dul rdo rje. If it is a girl, call her Phag mo skyid." That's how I got my name.

Lha sgron (b. 1965, Brag dmar nang villager, female), Tshe ring rdo rje's (b. 2012, male) maternal grandmother, said:

When Tshe ring's mother was pregnant, I visited Bya khung Monastery with his mother to circumambulate Phag mo Temple. We believe that such religious activities at this temple help us give birth more easily. We also asked a *bla ma* there for a name

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<sup>22</sup> Tuttle (2010:33-39) writes:

The original d+hl/ Lde tsha Monastery was founded in the seventeenth century by d+hl tsha nang so as a branch monastery of Bya khyung Monastery and shortly afterwards became the seat of the First Zhwa dmar Pandita (b. eighteenth century). The New/Upper d+hl tsha Monastery was founded by the Fourth Zhwa dmar Pandita (1729-1796).

for the unborn child. The *bla ma* said, "Call the child Phag mo skyid if it is a girl and Tshe ring rdo rje if it is a boy."

Names may be changed during times of illness, for example, Ban de tshe ring (b. 1995, student, male) reported:

My parents told me that Grandfather gave me my first name. I don't know what that name was. Later, I became very sick and my family went to Klu tshang<sup>23</sup> Monastery where my name was changed to Ban de tshe ring. Most families in my village give names to their own children but, if the children get very sick, they go to the local monastery to change their names.

Chos skyong mtsho (b. 1936, Brag dmar nang villager), the paternal grandmother of Phag mo mtsho (b. 1993, female), also gave an account of illness and name change:

About seven days after Phag mo mtsho was born, I visited Uncle Dkon mchog tshe ring, a tantric monk, in Sdong rgan thang Village, Dkar brjid Township, Khri ka County. I asked him for a name for my granddaughter. After returning home, I had forgotten the full name, but I was sure it was something like Tshe gzungs. The family then decided on the name Tshe gzungs sgrol ma. Later, she became very sick. The family took her to several *bla ma* and also went to several hospitals. Finally, the family went to Bya khyung Monastery where her name was changed to Phag mo mtsho.

Tshe ring skyid (b. 1930, Brag dmar nang villager), the maternal grandmother of Phag mo rdo rje (b. 1998, male), also gave an account of a name change involving visiting Bya khyung Monastery:

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<sup>23</sup> Klu tshang/ Rnye dgon bshad sgrub dar rgyas dge 'phel gling is located about two kilometers northwest of Mang ra Township Town, Mang ra County. It was founded in 1889 by the fourth Rnye incarnation, Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (Shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring 2005).

Right after he was born in Brag dmar nang Village, his mother took him to visit her natal home in Dongpen where his grandfather, Dkon ris, gave him the name Yul lha tshe ring. When he later became very sick, his family visited Bya khyung Monastery and a monk gave him a new name - Phag mo rdo rje.

#### ILLNESS AND NAME CHANGE

The belief that a name may be too 'strong' (*btsan* in Tibetan) may refer to ordinary people who have the names of such extraordinary people as Tsong kha pa or Mi la ras pa. It is a common idea that ordinary people lack merit to deserve the names of extraordinary people and that they may be harmed by such names. This may then lead to name change. Klu mtsho sgrol ma (b. 1993, student, female) explained:

My first name, Nor 'dzin dbang mo, was given by a village tantric practitioner. When I got sick at the age of two, my family visited a *bla ma*<sup>24</sup> who said, "Nor 'dzin dbang mo is quite a strong name for her," and then he changed my name to Klu mtsho sgrol ma.

Similarly, Phag mo rdo rje (b. 1994, student, male), said:

My first name was Phag mo don grub. It was given by a *bla ma* in Bya khyung Monastery. I became very sick when I was three or four years old. Many blotches stayed on my face. My family visited the *bla ma* who had given me my first name. He said that my name was too strong and he changed it into Phag mo rdo rje. I then completely recovered. Some villagers visit Sku 'bum Monastery for a name for their children while others name their own children.

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<sup>24</sup> She did not know the *bla ma*'s name nor where he was from.

THE DATA

The data for Mtsho lho (Hainan) Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School and Brag dmar nang Village are presented separately, however, the same parameters of analysis are used. The broad questions this data addresses relate to gender and frequency of occurrence:

- the most common names irrespective of gender
- the number of syllables in names irrespective of gender
- the most common first two syllables for all names
- the most common final two syllable names for names with six and four syllables.
- the most common four syllable names for both males and females
- the most common three syllable names for males and females
- the most common two syllable names for both males and females, and
- the most common final syllable in three syllable names for both males and females.

Name Data for Mtsho lho (Hainan) Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School

Of the total 1,468 names surveyed, 795 were male and 673 were female. As shown in Figure 1, only two names were shared by both males and females: Ye shes (one male, one female) and Bsod nam (one male, one female).

Figure 1. The most common names for males and females (1,468 students - 795 males, 673 females) in Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, Khri ka County.

Male	#	Female	#
Tshe ring don grub	10	Phag mo mtsho	12
Rdo rje tshe ring	9	Rdo rje mtsho	11
Don grub rgyal	8	Tshe ring sgrol ma	10



Tshe ring rdo rje	7	Rdo rje sgrol ma	9
Rdo rje don grub	7	Rin chen sgrol ma	8
Phag mo don grub	7	Phag mo skyid	8
Bsod nams rdo rje	7	Phag mo sgrol ma	8
Tshe ring thar	6	Tshe ring lha mo	7
O rgyan tshe ring	6	Tshe dbang sgrol ma	7
Klu 'bum tshe ring	6	Rin chen skyid	7
Don grub tshe ring	6	Rdo rje skyid	7
Bsod nams tshe ring	6	Pad ma mtsho	7
Bkra shis tshe ring	6		

The most common names for males were Tshe ring don grub (ten), Rdo rje tshe ring (nine), Don grub rgyal (eight), Tshe ring rdo rje (seven), Rdo rje don grub (seven), Phag mo don grub (seven), Bsod nams rdo rje (seven), Tshe ring thar (six), O rgyan tshe ring (six), Klu 'bum tshe ring (six), Don grub tshe ring (six), Bsod nams tshe ring (six), and Bkra shis tshe ring (six).

The most common names for females were Phag mo mtsho (twelve), Rdo rje mtsho (eleven), Tshe ring sgrol ma (ten), Rdo rje sgrol ma (nine), Rin chen sgrol ma (eight), Phag mo skyid (eight), Phag mo sgrol ma (eight), Tshe ring lha mo (seven), Tshe dbang sgrol ma (seven), Rin chen skyid (seven), Rdo rje skyid (seven), and Pad ma mtsho (seven).

No single name for either females or males had a high frequency. The most common names listed above accounted for eleven percent of all males surveyed and fifteen percent of all females surveyed. This suggests considerable diversity in local names and naming practices. However, as subsequent discussion will show, when syllables comprising names are analyzed, there is much commonality between genders.

Among the most common names for males, thirteen had four syllables and two had three syllables. Of the female names, twelve had three syllables and six had four syllables.

Figure 2. Syllable length of names for both males and females.

# of Syllables	# of Names	%	Male		Female	
			#	%	#	%
	1,468		795	54.00	673	46
6	1	0.07	1	100.00	0	0.00
5	6	0.41	6	100.00	0	0.00
4	706	48.09	469	66.43	237	33.57
3	661	45.03	265	40.09	396	59.91
2	94	6.40	54	57.45	40	42.55

Only one (male) name had six syllables - Gu ru tshe brtan rdo rje.<sup>25</sup> Of all names, six (all male) had five syllables, 706 (469 males, 237 females) had four syllables, 661 (396 females, 265 males) had three syllables, and ninety-four (fifty-four males, forty females) had two syllables, as shown in Figure 2. Most names (ninety-three percent) had either four syllables (forty-eight percent) or three syllables (forty-five percent). Five syllable names accounted for less than 0.5 percent and were all male names - Skal bzang ting 'dzin rgyal, Rta mgrin mgon po thar, Pad ma don grub rgyal, Sras mchog rdo rje rgyal, Bsod nam dpa' ldan rgyal, and Blo rta mgrin rgya mtsho. Two syllable names accounted for about six percent of total names.

Only males had names with six syllables and five syllables.

Of the students who had four syllable names, sixty-six percent were male and thirty-four percent were female. In contrast, sixty percent of three syllable names were female, compared to forty percent for males. About fifty-seven percent of the two syllable names were for males (forty-three percent for females).

Rdo rje was the most common first two syllables for all names, as displayed in Figure 3.

<sup>25</sup> This is a formal name. "Gu ru" is neither added as a nickname nor does it indicate this student's status as a teacher.

Figure 3. The ten most common first two syllables for all names.

Syllables	#	Male	Female
Rdo rje	92	63	29
Tshe ring	65	37	28
Bsod nams	57	36	21
Phag mo	48	17	31
Pad ma	48	37	11
Rin chen	42	20	22
Skal bzang	28	19	9
Lha mo	26	3	23
Rta mgrin	23	14	9
Sgrol ma	22	7	15

About twice as many males (sixty-three) had these two beginning syllables as compared to females (twenty-nine). The same was true for the second and third most common first two syllables, Tshe ring and Bsod nams, although the gender discrepancy was less pronounced, i.e., thirty-seven males as compared to twenty-eight females, and thirty-six males and twenty-one females, respectively. Phag mo, Rin chen, Lha mo, and Sgrol ma were more common for females than males.

Gender differences in the final two syllables of all names are even more dramatic, as indicated in Figure 4, which does not include names that have only two, three, or five syllables.

Figure 4. The most common final two syllables for names with six and four syllables.

Syllables	#	Male	Female
Sgrol ma	165	2	163
Tshe ring	148	135	13
Rdo rje	77	77	0
Don grub	56	56	0
Bkra shis	28	27	1
Rgya mtsho	25	25	0
Tshe brtan	22	22	0

Lha mo	19	0	19
Rgyal mtshan	14	13	1
Rnam rgyal	10	10	0
Rin chen	10	10	0

The two syllables in a two syllable name are not considered as 'final'. In the case of the final two syllables in five and three syllable names it may be inappropriate to split the two syllable phrase that has a significant meaning in the context of A mdo Tibetan naming practices. For example, in the name Tshe ring mtsho,<sup>26</sup> Tshe ring indicates 'long life', and Mtsho means 'lake'. Ring mtsho, in contrast, lacks specific meaning. Similarly, the final two syllables rje rgyal in the name Sras mchog rdo rje rgyal lack specific meaning, whereas rdo rje translates as 'vajra'. There are exceptions, for example, the final two syllables rgya mtsho in the case of the five syllable name Blo rta mgrin rgya mtsho, indicates 'ocean', but this is uncommon in contemporary Tibetan naming practice in terms of our survey. In the case of three syllable names, g.yang indicates 'auspicious' or 'prosperity' in the name G.yang dpal 'dzoms. Dpal 'dzoms signifies 'abundant glory' 'all virtuous things'.

Of the total 165 students whose names ended in Sgrol ma, 163 were female, while only two were male. Similarly, of the 148 students whose names end in Tshe ring (the second most common final two syllables), 135 were male and only thirteen were female. In addition, these final two syllables were only found for males: Rdo rje (seventy-seven), Don grub (fifty-six), Rgya mtsho (twenty-five), Tshe brtan (twenty-two), Rnam rgyal (ten), and Rin chen (ten). Lha mo (nineteen) was only found in names for females.

Figure 5 shows the most common four syllable names for males and females.

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<sup>26</sup> As noted, Tshe ring signifies 'long life' while mtsho means 'lake'. However, in the context of Tibetan naming practice, Tshe ring mtsho indicates 'long life' while *mtsho* is merely a suffix.

Figure 5. The most common four syllable names for both males and females.

Male	#	Female	#
Tshe ring don grub	10	Tshe ring sgrol ma	10
Rdo rje tshe ring	9	Rdo rje sgrol ma	9
Tshe ring rdo rje	7	Rin chen sgrol ma	8
Rdo rje don grub	7	Phag mo sgrol ma	8
Phag mo don grub	7	Tshe ring lha mo	7
Bsod nams rdo rje	7	Tshe dbang sgrol ma	7
O rgyan tshe ring	6	Sangs rgyas sgrol ma	6
Klu 'bum tshe ring	6	Bsod nams sgrol ma	6
Don grub tshe ring	6	Tshe skyid sgrol ma	5
Bsod nams tshe ring	6	Lha mo sgrol ma	5
Bkra shis tshe ring	6	Bde skyid sgrol ma	5

The most common male names were Tshe ring don grub (ten), Rdo rje tshe ring (nine), Tshe ring rdo rje (seven), Rdo rje don grub (seven), Phag mo don grub (seven), Bsod nams rdo rje (seven), O rgyan tshe ring (six), Klu 'bum tshe ring (six), Don grub tshe ring (six), Bsod nams tshe ring (six), and Bkra shis tshe ring (six). The ten most common four syllable names for females were Tshe ring sgrol ma (ten), Rdo rje sgrol ma (nine), Rin chen sgrol ma (eight), Phag mo sgrol ma (eight), Tshe ring lha mo (seven), Tshe dbang sgrol ma (seven), Sangs rgyas sgrol ma (six), Bsod nams sgrol ma (six), Tshe skyid sgrol ma (five), Lha mo sgrol ma (five), and Bde skyid sgrol ma (five).

The most frequent name for males was Tshe ring don grub (ten) and for females it was Tshe ring sgrol ma (ten).

The most common three syllable names for both males and females are presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6. The most common three syllable names for both males and females.

Male	#	Female	#
Don grub rgyal	8	Phag mo mtsho	12
Tshe ring thar	6	Rdo rje mtsho	11
Skal bzang 'bum	4	Phag mo skyid	8
Lcags thar rgyal	4	Rin chen skyid	7
Dbang chen rgyal	4	Rdo rje skyid	7
Tshe thar 'bum	3	Pad ma mtsho	7
Snying lcags rgyal	3	Tshe ring skyid	6
Skal bzang rgyal	3	Khon thar skyid	6
Rdo rje rgyal	3	'Brug mo rgyal	6
Rdo rje 'bum	3	Sgrol dkar skyid	5
Phag pa skyabs	3	Sgrol ma mtsho	5
Pad ma rgyal	3	Rin chen mtsho	5
Lha 'brug rgyal	3	Rig 'dzin mtsho	5
Kun thar rgyal	3	Klu mo mtsho	5
Gsang bdag skyabs	3	Bsod nams skyid	5
Gnam lha rgyal	3	Bde skyid mtsho	5
G.yang skyabs rgyal	3		

Phag mo mtsho (twelve), Rdo rje mtsho (eleven), and Phag mo skyid (eight) were the three most common three syllable names for females. The five most common male names with three syllables were Don grub rgyal (eight), Tshe ring thar (six), Skal bzang 'bum (four), Lcags thar rgyal (four), and Dbang chen rgyal (four).

The most common two syllable names for males were Rdo rje (four), Mgon po (three), Tshe ring (two), Thub bstan (two), and Rgya mtsho (two). Phag mtsho (three), Byams mtsho (three), Sgrol ma (two), Mtsho mo (two), Klu mo (two), and Gnam mtsho (two) were the six most frequent two syllable names for females.

Figure 7 shows the most common final syllable in three syllable names for both males and females.

Figure 7. The most common final syllable in three syllable names for both males and females.

Final Syllable	#	Male	Female
Rgyal	199	167	32
Mtsho	174	0	174
Skyid	161	0	161
Thar	35	27	8
Skyabs	31	31	0
'Bum	28	27	1
Yag	14	3	11
Byams	9	4	5
Mkhar	3	3	0
Sgrol	2	0	2

Rgyal was the most common syllable for males (177) - nearly five times more frequent than for females (thirty-two). Similarly, mtsho appeared 174 times for females, but not once in male names. A third very common final syllable for females was skyid (161), which did not appear at all in names for males. Similarly, skyabs appeared thirty-one times in male names, but not once for females.

## VILLAGE DATA

Names, name frequency, and naming practices in Brag dmar nang (Zhemeang), a village of 233 residents (110 males, and 123 females), are now examined, beginning with the most common names for males and females, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. The most common names (males and female) in Brag dmar nang Village.

Male	#	Female	#
Phag mo tshe ring	4	Rdo rje mtsho	7
Rdo rje bkra shis	4	Phag mo sgrol ma	6
Rdo rje tshe ring	4	Lha mo tshe ring	3
Don grub	3	Rdo rje sgrol ma	3
Tshe ring rdo rje	3	'Brug mo mtsho	3
Mgon po tshe ring	2	Sangs rgyas sgrol ma	2
Rta mgrin dbang rgyal	2	Bsam grub sgrol ma	2
Rdo rje rab brtan	2	Phag mo	2
Rdo rje lhun grub	2	Bun khrang mtsho	2
Tshe brtan rdo rje	2	Lha ris	2
Bsod nams rdo rje	2	Phag mo skyid	2
Phag mo don grub	2	Sgrol ma	2
Rin chen rdo rje	2	Tshe ring skyid	2
Pad ma dbang rgyal	2	Phag mo mtsho	2
Tshe ring don grub	2	Gcod pa mtsho	2
Don grub tshe ring	2		
Rdo rje rin chen	2		
Dpal chen rdo rje	2		

No single name was recorded more than seven times. The single most common female name was Rdo rje mtsho (seven) and the most common male names were Phag mo tshe ring, Rdo rje bkra shis, and Rdo rje tshe ring, each of which appeared four times. However, this changes when names are analyzed in terms of syllables, as shown in Figure 9.



Figure 9. Syllable length of names for both males and females.

# of Syllables	Total Names = 233	%	Male		Female	
			#	%	#	%
			110	47	123	53
4	148	64	93	63	55	37
3	54	23	5	9	49	91
2	31	13	12	39	19	61

No villagers had a name with more than four syllables. Of the 148 four syllable names, sixty-four percent were for males and thirty-seven percent were for females. Ninety-one percent of the fifty-four, three syllable names were for females as compared to only nine percent for males.

Rdo rje was the most common first two syllables for both males (twenty-two) and females (fourteen), followed in popularity by Phag mo (twenty-five) for both males (nine) and females (sixteen) as Figure 10 shows.

Figure 10. The most common first two syllables for all names.

Name	#	Male	Female
Rdo rje	36	22	14
Phag mo	25	9	16
Tshe ring	16	10	6
Pad ma	9	6	3
Rin chen	9	4	5
Don grub	8	6	2
Bsod nams	6	6	0
Mgon po	5	4	1
Sangs rgyas	5	2	3
Mkha' 'gro	5	1	4
Bkra shis	5	2	3
Lha mo	5	0	5

Among the first two syllables of all names, Lha mo was only used for females (five) and Bsod nams was recorded only for males (six).

Gender division is also evident for the final two syllables for all names, as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11. The ten most common final two syllables for all names.

Name	#	Male	Female
Sgrol ma	32	0	32
Tshe ring	30	24	6
Rdo rje	19	18	1
Don grub	9	9	0
Bkra shis	6	6	0
Dbang rgyal	5	5	0
Mtsho mo	5	0	5
Tshe brtan	5	5	0
Rnam rgyal	3	3	0
Rin chen	3	3	0

Sgrol ma was recorded only for females (thirty-two) and Tshe ring was used four times more often by males (twenty-four) than by females (six). In addition to Sgrol ma, other gender specific final two syllables include Don grub (nine males), Dbang rgyal (five males), Mtsho mo (five females), and Tshe brtan (five males).

Figure 12 displays the most common four syllable names for males and females.

Figure 12. The most common four syllable names for males and females.

Male Name	#	Female Name	#
Phag mo tshe ring	4	Phag mo sgrol ma	6
Rdo rje bkra shis	4	Lha mo tshe ring	3
Rdo rje tshe ring	4	Rdo rje sgrol ma	3
Tshe ring rdo rje	3	Sangs rgyas sgrol ma	2
Mgon po tshe ring	2	Bsam grub sgrol ma	2
Rta mgrin dbang rgyal	2		
Rdo rje rab brtan	2		
Rdo rje lhun grub	2		

Tshe brtan rdo rje	2		
Bsod nams rdo rje	2		
Mgon po tshe ring	2		
Phag mo don grub	2		
Rin chen rdo rje	2		
Pad ma dbang rgyal	2		
Tshe ring don grub	2		
Don grub tshe ring	2		
Rdo rje rin chen	2		
Dpal chen rdo rje	2		

Phag mo tshe ring (four), Rdo rje bkra shis (four), and Rdo rje tshe ring (four), were the most common four syllable names for males. The most common four syllable names for females were Phag mo sgrol ma (six), Lha mo tshe ring (three), and Rdo rje sgrol ma (three).

Rdo rje mtsho (seven) and 'Brug mo mtsho (three) were the most common three syllable names for females.

There were only five three syllable names for males (Tshe ring rgyal, Tshe ring byams, Tshe ring thar, Rdo rje thar, and Lha mchog skyabs) and each occurred only once.

Don grub was the most common two syllable name for males (three occurrences) while the most common two syllable names for females were Phag mo (two), Lha ris (two), and Sgrol ma (two).

The final syllable in three syllable names was closely associated with gender. Mtsho was used by twenty-nine females and not once by a male, while skyid was used by twenty females, but not once by males as a final syllable. Thar was used by two males as a final syllable and not once by females.

## GENDER AND NAMES

Gendered naming practices in both Brag dmar nang Village and Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School merits discussion. All of the 233 Brag dmar nang villagers and 1,468

students that I orally interviewed were named by males. However, there are exceptions, e.g., Tshe lo skyid (b. 1994, female) indicated that most villagers in her home community consult nuns in Gcan tsha County for a name:

A *bla ma* from Sum pa Village – Mother's natal village – gave me my name. Most of my villagers go to a nunnery in Gcan tsha County and ask the nuns for a name when there is a birth in the home. If the family has monks or tantric practitioners, then they give names to their children.

This is the only example we have of women systematically naming children.

The study shows that syllable length was related to gender, e.g., only males had names with five or six syllables.

Furthermore some final syllables were strongly predictive of gender, for example, *mtsho* (174 times) and *skyid* (161) were final syllables for females and never featured in male names in the school data. For males, *skyabs* appeared thirty-one times but not once for females in the school data.

This finding was echoed in Brag dmar nang Village data, where *mtsho* featured twenty-nine times for females, and *skyid* twenty times for females but neither featured even once for males. *Thar* was used by two males but not by females. From this data it could be inferred that in three syllable names *skyid* and *mtsho* indicate a female.

The picture is different for two and four syllable names. Some names lacked gender specificity, i.e., the school data showed that *Ye shes* and *Bsod nams* were shared by both males and females. In the case of four syllable names, the first two syllables rarely indicate gender while the final two syllables may distinguish gender. For instance, *Rdo rje*, *Don grub*, *Rgya mtsho*, *Tshe brtan*, *Rnam rgyal*, and *Rin chen*, and *Dbang rgyal* were used only for males in both the school and village data while *Sgrol ma*, *Lha mo*, and *Mtsho mo* were found only for females as final two syllables. *Tshe ring* was a gender neutral name. This resonates with Childs's (2003) finding that *Tshe*

ring and Bsod noms tended to be gender neutral names while Sgrol ma was used exclusively for females. Don grub and Rgya mtsho were only for males.

## CONCLUSIONS

Childs's (2003) data, which is limited specifically to Skyid grong in the Tibet Autonomous Region, provides a valuable point of contrast for this study of names in A mdo both in terms of changes in time and locations; it examines names fifty years before our data collection and in an area outside of the A mdo region. Comparison highlights notable differences. Childs lists the most common names that have four syllables, and unusual common names. For example, Tshe ring was the most common name in sKyid grong with 299 individuals as either the first name (first two syllables) or second name (final two syllables) for both males and females. Nyi ma and Zla ba were the most common first names. In terms of gender specificity, Tshe ring, bSod noms (Bsod noms), bKra shis (Bkra shis), Tshe brtan, and bsTan 'dzin (Bstan 'dzin) are gender neutral as first names, but are used almost exclusively for males as second names, while Phur bu is used as a second name only for females.

In contrast, of the 1,468 names surveyed in Mtsho lho Number Two Nationalities Senior Middle School, Khri ka County, Rdo rje were the most common first two syllables for all names. About twice as many males (sixty-three) had these first two syllables than females (twenty-nine). When used as the first two syllables in a name, Tshe ring (thirty-seven males, twenty-eight females) and Bsod noms (thirty-six males, twenty-one females) were not gender specific.

Unlike Childs's finding, Nyi ma, Zla ba, Bkra shis, and Bstan 'dzin were uncommon names in our school data. Similar to the school data findings, in Brag dmar nang Village, Rdo rje (thirty-six) was also the most common first two syllables for both males (twenty-two) and females (fourteen), followed in popularity by Phag mo (twenty-five) for both males (nine) and females (sixteen). Among the first two syllables of all names in Brag dmar nang Village, Lha mo was only

used for females (five) and Bsod nams was recorded only for males (six).

In terms of the most common last two syllables for all names surveyed in the school, 165 ended in Sgrol ma (163 females, two males). Of the 148 names ending in Tshe ring, 135 were males and thirteen were females. In addition, as the final two name syllables Rdo rje (seventy-seven), Don grub (fifty-six), Rgya mtsho (twenty-five), Tshe brtan (twenty-two), Rnam rgyal (ten), and Rin chen (ten), were found only for males while Lha mo (nineteen) was found for females only.

The most common final two syllables in Brag dmar nang Village were Sgrol ma, which was recorded only for females (thirty-two). Tshe ring was used by four times more males (twenty-four) than females (six). In addition to Sgrol ma, other gender specific final two syllables include Don grub (nine males), Dbang rgyal (five males), Mtsho mo (five females), and Tshe brtan (five males).

Naming in our study area is a living process that is very much ongoing in A mdo. We encourage more research in ethnographic Tibet on local naming practices to better understand naming - a fundamental aspect of language and culture.

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## NON-ENGLISH TERMS

,

'ba' འབལ། (རྫོང་།)

'bru འབྲུ།

'brug mo mtsho འབྲུག་མོ་མཚོ།

'brug mo rgyal འབྲུག་མོ་རྒྱལ།

'brug rgyal འབྲུག་རྒྱལ།

'brug rgyal tshe ring འབྲུག་རྒྱལ་ཚེ་རིང་།

'bum འབུམ།

'dru འབྲུ།

'grub འབྲུབ།

'jam dbyangs འཇམ་དབྱངས།

'phags འཕགས།

'phrin las འཕྲིན་ལས།

'tsho འཚོ།

A

a mdo ཨ་མདོ།

B

Baima 白玛 (pad ma པད་མ།)

ban de tshe ring བན་དེ་ཚེ་རིང་།

Basang 巴桑 (pa sangs པ་སངས་།)

bde skyid mtsho བདེ་སྦྱིད་མཚོ།

bde skyid sgrol ma བདེ་སྦྱིད་སྒྲོལ་མ།

bka' rgyu བཀའ་རྒྱུད།

bKra shis (bkra shis) བཀ་ཤེས།

bkra shis mtsho བཀ་ཤེས་མཚོ།

bkra shis rgya mtsho བཀ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

bkra shis tshe ring བཀ་ཤེས་ཚེ་རིང་།

bla ma བླ་མ།

blo bzang བློ་བཟང་།

blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma བློ་བཟང་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཉི་མ།

blo rta mgrin rgya mtsho བློ་རྟ་མགོན་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

blun po བུན་པོ།

bon བོན།

brag dkar བྲག་དཀར། (Xinghai 兴海)

brag dmar nang བྲག་དམར་ནང་། (Zhemeang 者么昂)

bsam grub sgrol ma བསམ་གྲུབ་སྒྲོལ་མ།

bse བཤེ།

bskal bzang བསྐལ་བཟང་།

bSod nams (bsod nams) བསོད་ནམས་།

bsod nams don grub བསོད་ནམས་དོན་གྲུབ་།

bsod nams dpa' ldan rgyal བསོད་ནམས་དཔལ་ལྷན་རྒྱལ་།

bsod nams mtsho བསོད་ནམས་མཚོ།

bsod nams rdo rje བསོད་ནམས་རྩེ་རྩེ།

bsod nams rgya mtsho བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

bsod nams rin chen rgyal བསོད་ནམས་རིན་ཆེན་རྒྱལ་།

bsod nams sgrol ma བསོད་ནམས་སྒྲོལ་མ།

bsod nams skyid བསོད་ནམས་སྐྱིད།

bsod nams tshe ring བསོད་ནམས་ཚེ་རིང་།

btsan བཙན།

bsTan 'dzin (bstan 'dzin) བསྟན་འཛིན།

bu khrid བུ་ཁྱིད།

bun khrang mtsho བུན་ཁང་མཚོ།

bya khyung བྱ་ཁྱུང་།

byams བྱམས།

byams mtsho བྱམས་མཚོ།

bzang mo བཟང་མོ།

C

Cairang 才让 (tshe ring ཚེ་རིང་།)

Cangmujue 仓木决 (mtshams gcod མཚམས་གཙོད།)

chos bzang sgrol ma ཚོས་བཟང་སྒྲོལ་མ།

chos mtsho sgrol ma ཚོས་མཚོ་སྒྲོལ་མ།

chos rje don grub rin chen ཚོས་རྩེ་དོན་གྲུབ་རིན་ཆེན།

chos skyong mtsho ཚོས་སྐྱོང་མཚོ།

chu cha ཚུ་ཅ།

chu nub ཚུ་ནུབ།

Chuba 初八 (tshe brgyad ཚེ་བརྒྱད།)

chuoyi 初一 (tshe gcig ཚེ་གཅིག)

ciren 次仁 (tshe ring ཚེ་རིང་།)

Cuo 措 (mtsho མཚོ།)

## D

d+hI tsha nang so སྒྲིཛ་ནང་སོ

d+hI/lde tsha སྒྲིཛེ་ཚོ

Dahai 大海 ('rgya mtsho མཚོ)

Dama 达玛 (dar dmar དར་དམར།)

dan tig དན་ཏིག

Dandou 丹斗 (dan tig དན་ཏིག)

Danzhengjia 旦正加 (rta mgrin rgyal རྟ་མཁོན་རྒྱལ།)

Daola 道拉

Dawa 达瓦 (zla ba ལྷ་བ།)

dbang chen rgyal དབང་ཆེན་རྒྱལ།

dbang ldan དབང་ལྡན།

dbang rgyal དབང་རྒྱལ།

dbra དབ།

Dejimeiduo 德吉梅朵 (bde skyid me tog བདེ་སྦྱིད་མེ་རྟོག)

dge 'dun དགེ་འདུན།

dge 'dun mtsho དགེ་འདུན་མཚོ།

dge lugs དགེ་ལུགས།

dgra 'dul དག་འདུལ།

dgra 'dul rdo rje དག་འདུལ་རྡོ་རྗེ།

dkar brjid དཀར་བཞིན། (Garang གར་ཤེན)

dkar brjid sngags khang དཀར་བཞིན་སྐྱགས་ཁང་།

dkar brjid sngags khang rnam grol pad+ma gling དཀར་བཞིན་སྐྱགས་ཁང་རྣམ་

ཐོལ་པདྨ་གླིང་།

dkon mchog rgya mtsho དཀོན་མཆོག་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

dkon mchog tshe ring དཀོན་མཆོག་ཚེ་རིང་།

dkon ris དཀོན་རིས།

dmar rdo དམར་རྡོ།

don grub དོན་གྲུབ།

don grub rgyal དོན་གྲུབ་རྒྱལ།

don grub tshe ring དོན་གྲུབ་ཚེ་རིང་།

Dong 董, 东 (ldong ལྷོང་།, stong ལྷོང་།)

Dongpen 东朋

dpa' g.yang 'bum mtsho དཔ་འགྲལ་པ་མཚོ།

dpa' lung དཔ་ལུང་། (Hualong 化隆)

dpa' ris དཔ་འ་རིས།

dpal 'dzoms དཔལ་འཛོམས།

dpal chen དཔལ་ཆེན།

dpal chen rdo rje དཔལ་ཆེན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

dpal lha དཔལ་ལྷ།

dpal mo དཔལ་མོ།

dpal mtsho skyid དཔལ་མཚོ་སྦྱིད།

dpal skyid དཔལ་སྦྱིད།

Duojie 多杰 (rdo rje རྡོ་རྗེ།)

Duojiezhaxi 多杰扎西

F

Feiji 飞机

fu 富

G

g.yam གཡམ།

g.yang གཡང།

g.yang dpal 'dzoms གཡང་དཔལ་འཛོམས།

g.yang skyabs rgyal གཡང་སྐྱམས་རྒྱལ།

g.yang skyid mtsho གཡང་སྦྱིད་མཚོ།

g.yang skyid rgyal གཡང་སྦྱིད་རྒྱལ།

Ga 噶 (dkar དཀར།)

Ga Dawacairang 嘎达哇才让 དཀར་རྩ་བ་ཆེ་རིང།

Gama Jiangcun 噶玛降村 (skar ma rgya mtsho སྐར་མ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།)

Gansu 甘肃

gangs dkar 'tsho གངས་དཀར་འཚོ།

gangs dkar mtsho གངས་དཀར་མཚོ།

Gazangzhuoma 尕藏卓玛 (skal bzang sgrol ma སྐལ་བཟང་སྦྱོལ་མ།)

gcan tsha གཅན་ཚ།

gces ming གཅེས་མིང།

gcod pa mtsho གཅོད་པ་མཚོ།

gcod pa tshe ring གཅོད་པ་ཆེ་རིང།

gdung rus གདུང་རུས།

gnam lha rgyal གནམ་ལྷ་རྒྱལ།

gnam mtsho གནམ་མཚོ།

Gongchan 共产

grub གུབ།

gsang bdag གསང་བདག

gsang bdag skyabs གསང་བདག་སྐྱབས།  
 gser chen གསར་ཆེན།  
 gser gshong གསེར་གཤོང་།  
 gshong gshan གཤོང་གསལ་ན།  
 gu ru mtsho གུ་རུ་མཚོ།  
 gu ru tshe brtan rdo rje གུ་རུ་ཚེ་བརྟན་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 gu ru tshe ring གུ་རུ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 Guoqing 国庆

H

He Jianchun 和建春  
 Hedong 河东 (rma shar མ་ཤར།)  
 Hexi 河西 (rma nub མ་ནུབ།)  
 Heying 河阴  
 hor rgyal ཧོར་རྒྱལ།  
 Hu Fengzhong 胡凤忠  
 Hualong 化隆 (dpa' lung དཔ་ལུང་།)  
 Huzhu 互助

J

Ji 吉 (skyid སྐྱིད།)  
 Jia Yixin 贾一心  
 Jiayang 加羊 ('jam dbyangs འཇམ་དབྱངས།)  
 Jinzhu 金珠 (bcings grol བཅིངས་འགྲོལ།)  
 Jinzhumeiduo 金珠梅朵 (gcings grol me tog བཅིངས་འགྲོལ་མེ་དོག།)

K

kha sha mthil ཁ་ཤ་མཐིལ།  
 kha stug ཁ་སུག།  
 khe gri ཁེ་གྲི།  
 khen thar sgrol ma ཁེན་ཐར་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
 kho ཁོ།  
 khon thar skyid ཁོན་ཐར་སྐྱིད།  
 khri 'du ཁྲི་དུ། (Chenduo 称多)  
 khri ka ཁྲི་ཀ། (Guide 贵德)  
 khri ka ban de tshe ring ཁྲི་ཀ་བན་དེ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 klu ལུ།  
 klu 'bum tshe ring ལུ་འབུམ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 klu dkar skyid ལུ་དཀར་སྐྱིད།

klu mo ལུ་མོ།  
 klu mo mtsho ལུ་མོ་མཚོ།  
 klu mo skyid ལུ་མོ་སྒྱིད།  
 klu mo thar ལུ་མོ་བར།  
 klu mtsho sgrol ma ལུ་མཚོ་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
 klu rgyal ལུ་རྒྱལ།  
 klu rgyal 'bum ལུ་རྒྱལ་འབུམ།  
 klu tshang ལུ་ཚང།  
 kun thar rgyal ལུན་ཐར་རྒྱལ།

L

La ལ། (lha ལྷ།)  
 Lamu ལམུ་ (lha mo ལུ་མོ།)  
 lcags byams tshe ring ལུགས་བྱམས་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 lcags thar rgyal ལུགས་ཐར་རྒྱལ།  
 lcags thar tshe ring ལུགས་ཐར་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 ldong ka tshang bsod nams lha mo ལྷོང་ཀ་ཚང་བསོད་ནམས་ལུ་མོ།  
 ldong ka tshang dge shis chos grags ལྷོང་ཀ་ཚང་དགེ་ཤིས་ཆོས་གྲགས།  
 ldong ka tshang skal bzang sgrol ma ལྷོང་ཀ་ཚང་སྐལ་བཟང་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
 ldong ལྷོང་།

Ledu ལེ་དུ་

lha 'brug rgyal ལྷ་འབྲུག་རྒྱལ།  
 lha khang thang ལྷ་ཁང་ཐང་།  
 lha lo tshe ring ལྷ་ལོ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 lha mchog skyabs ལྷ་མཚན་སྐུབས།  
 lha mo ལུ་མོ།  
 lha mo mtsho ལུ་མོ་མཚོ།  
 lha mo rgya mtsho ལུ་མོ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།  
 lha mo sgrol ma ལུ་མོ་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
 lha mo tshe ring ལུ་མོ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 lha ris ལྷ་རིས།  
 lha sa ལྷ་ས།  
 lha sgron ལྷ་སྒྲོན།  
 lhun grub ལུན་གུབ།  
 Li Zhonglin ལི་ཙོང་ལིན།  
 Lijia ལི་ཀ། (klu rgyal ལུ་རྒྱལ།)  
 Lijiacairang ལི་ཀ་ཅའ་རྟའ་ (klu rgyal tshe ring ལུ་རྒྱལ་ཚེ་རིང་།)



Lijiatai 利加太 (klu rgyal thar ལུ་རྒྱལ་ཐར།)

lkog gnyer ལྷོག་གཉེར།

lkugs pa ལུགས་པ།

M

Ma 玛 (མ།)

ma མ།

Ma 马

Ma Bufang 马步芳

mang ra མང་ར། (贵南)

Mao 毛 (mo མོ།)

mchod rten thang མཚོད་རྟེན་ཐང་།

Meiduo 梅朵 (me tog མེ་ཏོག་)

mgo mang མགོ་མང་།

mgo ril མགོ་རིལ།

mgon po མགོན་པོ།

mgon po tshe ring མགོན་པོ་ཚེ་རིང་།

mi la ras pa མི་ལ་རས་པ།

mi nyag མི་ཉག་

mkha' 'gro མཁའ་འགོ་

mkhar མཁར།

mo མོ།

mtshang ming མཚང་མིང་།

mtsho མཚོ།

mtsho lho མཚོ་ལྷོ། (Hainan 海南)

mtsho mo མཚོ་མོ།

mtsho shar མཚོ་ཤར།

mtsho sngon མཚོ་སྒོན། (Qinghai 青海)

mu 穆, 姆 (rmu རྩུ།, mo མོ།)

N

nag mdog ནག་མདོག་

niu 牛

Nong Ling 农玲

nor 'dzin dbang mo རོར་འཛིན་དབང་མོ།

nor bu རོར་བུ།

nyi ma ཉི་མ།

O

o rgyan tshe ring ཨོ་རྒྱན་ཚེ་རིང་།

P

pa sangs པ་སངས།

pad ma པད་མ།

pad ma bsod nams པད་མ་བསོད་ནམས།

pad ma dbang rgyal པད་མ་དབང་རྒྱལ།

pad ma don grub rgyal པད་མ་དོན་གྲུབ་རྒྱལ།

pad ma mtsho པད་མ་མཚོ།

pad ma rdo rje པད་མ་རྡོ་རྗེ།

pad ma rgyal པད་མ་རྒྱལ།

phag ཕག

phag mo ཕག་མོ།

phag mo don grub ཕག་མོ་དོན་གྲུབ།

phag mo mtsho ཕག་མོ་མཚོ།

phag mo rdo rje ཕག་མོ་རྡོ་རྗེ།

phag mo sgrol ma ཕག་མོ་སྐྱོལ་མ།

phag mo skyid ཕག་མོ་སྦྱིད།

phag mo tshe ring ཕག་མོ་ཚེ་རིང་།

phag mtsho ཕག་མཚོ།

phag pa skyabs ཕག་པ་སྐུབས།

phag skyid ཕག་སྦྱིད།

phrug ཕུག

phur bu ཕུར་བུ།

Puchi 普赤 (bu khrid བུ་ཁྱིད།)

Puke 普科 (bu gog བུ་གོག།)

Q

Qijia 其加 (khyi skyag ཁྱི་སྐྱག།)

Qimei 齐美 ('chi med འཆི་མེད།)

Qing 清

Qiongda 穷达 (chog thal ཆོག་ཐལ།)

Qizhu 其朱 (khyi phrug ཁྱི་ཕུག།)

Qu Youxin 曲又新

R

rdo bkra རྡོ་བརྒྱ།

rdo kho རྡོ་ཁོ།

rdo phrug རོ་ཕུག  
 rDo rje (rdo rje) རོ་རྒྱུ་  
 rdo rje 'bum རོ་རྒྱུ་འབུམ་  
 rdo rje bkra shis རོ་རྒྱུ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་  
 rdo rje bsam grub རོ་རྒྱུ་བསམ་གུབ་  
 rdo rje don grub རོ་རྒྱུ་དོན་གུབ་  
 rdo rje lhun grub རོ་རྒྱུ་ལུན་གུབ་  
 rdo rje mtsho རོ་རྒྱུ་མཚོ་  
 rdo rje phag mo རོ་རྒྱུ་ཕག་མོ་  
 rdo rje rab brtan རོ་རྒྱུ་རབ་བརྟན་  
 rdo rje rgyal རོ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱལ་  
 rdo rje rin chen རོ་རྒྱུ་རིན་ཆེན་  
 rdo rje sgrol ma རོ་རྒྱུ་སྒྲོལ་མ་  
 rdo rje skyid རོ་རྒྱུ་སྐྱིད་  
 rdo rje thar རོ་རྒྱུ་ཐར་  
 rdo rje tshe ring རོ་རྒྱུ་ཚེ་རིང་  
 rdzong རྫོང་  
 reb gong རེབ་གོང་ (Tongren 同仁)  
 rgya རྒྱལ་  
 rgya mtsho རྒྱལ་མཚོ་  
 rgyal རྒྱལ་  
 rgyal mtshan རྒྱལ་མཚན་  
 rig 'dzin རིག་འཛིན་  
 rig 'dzin mtsho རིག་འཛིན་མཚོ་  
 rig 'dzin rdo rje རིག་འཛིན་རོ་རྒྱུ་  
 rin chen རིན་ཆེན་  
 rin chen mtsho རིན་ཆེན་མཚོ་  
 rin chen rdo rje རིན་ཆེན་རོ་རྒྱུ་  
 rin chen sgrol ma རིན་ཆེན་སྒྲོལ་མ་  
 rin chen skyid རིན་ཆེན་སྐྱིད་  
 ring mtsho རིང་མཚོ་  
 rje rgyal རྒྱལ་རྒྱལ་  
 rma lho རྩ་ལྷོ་ (Huangnan 黄南)  
 rma shar རྩ་ཤར་ (Hedong 河东)  
 rmu རུ་  
 rna rko རྩ་རྫོ་

rnam rgyal རྣམ་རྒྱལ།

rnye རྣེ།

rnye dgon bshad sgrub dar rgyas dge 'phel gling རྣེ་དགོན་བཤམ་སྒྲུབ་དར་རྒྱལ་

དགོ་འཕེལ་སྒྲིང་།

rnying ma རྣིང་མ།

rta mgrin རྟ་མགིན།

rta mgrin bkra shis རྟ་མགིན་བརྒ་ཤིས།

rta mgrin dbang rgyal རྟ་མགིན་དབང་རྒྱལ།

rta mgrin mgon po thar རྟ་མགིན་མགོན་པོ་ཐར།

ru gsar རུ་གསར།

rus རུས།

S

sa skya ས་སྐྱ།

Sajinima སཱ་ཇི་ཉི་མ། (gsar brje nyi ma གསར་བརྟེ་ཉི་མ།)

sangs rgyas སངས་རྒྱལ།

sangs rgyas sgrol ma སངས་རྒྱལ་སྐྱོལ་མ།

sde tsha སྡེ་ཚ།

sdong rgan thang སྡོང་རྒན་ཐང་། (Dongguotang 东果堂)

Se སེ (bse བསེ།)

seng khri སེང་ཁྲི།

Sgra dbyangs rgyal po'i mtshan སྐྱ་དབྱངས་རྒྱལ་པོའི་མཚན།

sgra dbyangs སྐྱ་དབྱངས།

sgrol སྐྱོལ།

sgrol dkar skyid སྐྱོལ་དཀར་སྐྱིད།

sGrol ma (sgrol ma སྐྱོལ་མ།)

sgrol ma mtsho སྐྱོལ་མ་མཚོ།

sgrol ma rgya mtsho སྐྱོལ་མ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

Shaanxi 陕西

Shaanxi Normal University, Shaanxi shifan daxue 陕西师范大学

shag rdo skyid ཤག་ར་སྐྱིད།

shel 'byung 'khon thar tshe ring ཤེལ་འབྱུང་འཁོན་ཐར་ཚེ་རིང་།

shes rab bstan dar ཤེས་རབ་བསྟན་དར།

skal bzang སྐལ་བཟང་།

skal bzang 'bum སྐལ་བཟང་འབུམ།

skal bzang rgya mtsho སྐལ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

skal bzang rgyal སྐལ་བཟང་རྒྱལ།

skal bzang thar སྐལ་བཟང་ཐར་།  
 skal bzang ting 'dzin rgyal སྐལ་བཟང་ཏིང་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་།  
 ske ba སྐེ་བ།  
 sku 'bum སྐུ་འབུམ།  
 sku 'bum byams pa gling སྐུ་འབུམ་བྱམས་པ་གླིང་།  
 skyabs སྐལ་པ།  
 skyid སྐྱིད།  
 sKyid grong སྐྱིད་གྲོང་།  
 sman sog bla ma སྐུན་སོག་བླ་མ།  
 sngags pa སྔགས་པ།  
 snying lcags rgyal སྙིང་ལུགས་རྒྱལ་།  
 spyang ki སྤྱང་གི།  
 sras mchog rdo rje rgyal སྤྲས་མཆོག་རྡོ་རྗེ་རྒྱལ་།  
 srung ma སྤྱང་མ།  
 stobs chen rgyal སྟོབས་ཆེན་རྒྱལ་།  
 stobs stag lha སྟོབས་སྟག་ལྷ།  
 sum pa སུམ་པ།  
 Suo nanji 索南吉 (bsod nams skyid བསོད་ནམས་སྐྱིད།)

T

tha shal ཐ་ཤལ།  
 thar ཐར།  
 thub bstan ཐུབ་བསྟན།  
 Tai 太 (thar ཐར།)  
 Tianzhu 天祝  
 Tongren 同仁 (reb gong རེབ་གོང་།)  
 tsha phug ཐ་ཕུག  
 tshe brtan ཐེ་བརྟན།  
 tshe brtan rdo rje ཐེ་བརྟན་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 tshe brtan rgyal ཐེ་བརྟན་རྒྱལ་།  
 tshe dbang ཐེ་དབང་།  
 tshe dbang sgrol ma ཐེ་དབང་སྟོལ་མ།  
 tshe dbang skyid ཐེ་དབང་སྐྱིད།  
 tshe dpal rdo rje ཐེ་དཔལ་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 tshe gzungs ཐེ་གཟུངས།  
 tshe gzungs sgrol ma ཐེ་གཟུངས་སྟོལ་མ།  
 tshe gzungs skyid ཐེ་གཟུངས་སྐྱིད།

tshe kho ཚེ་ཁོ།  
tshe lo skyid ཚེ་ལོ་སྐྱིད།  
tshe mo rgyal ཚེ་མོ་རྒྱལ།  
tshe ring ཚེ་རིང་།  
tshe ring byams ཚེ་རིང་བྱམས།  
tshe ring don grub ཚེ་རིང་དོན་གྲུབ།  
tshe ring lha mo ཚེ་རིང་ལྷ་མོ།  
tshe ring mtsho ཚེ་རིང་མཚོ།  
tshe ring rdo rje ཚེ་རིང་རྩེ།  
tshe ring rgyal ཚེ་རིང་རྒྱལ།  
tshe ring sgrol ma ཚེ་རིང་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
tshe ring skyid ཚེ་རིང་སྐྱིད།  
tshe ring thar ཚེ་རིང་ཐར།  
tshe skyid sgrol ma ཚེ་སྐྱིད་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
tshe thar 'bum ཚེ་ཐར་འབུམ།  
tsong kha pa ཙོང་ཁ་པ།

Tu 土

W

Wangmu 旺姆 (dbang mo དབང་མོ།)

Weidong 卫东

Wenchang 文昌 (bun khrang བུན་ཁང་།)

Wenchangji 文昌吉 (bun khrang skyid བུན་ཁང་སྐྱིད།)

Wenchangjia 文昌加 (bun khrang rgyal བུན་ཁང་རྒྱལ།)

Wenchangtai 文昌太 (bun khrang thar བུན་ཁང་ཐར།)

Wenchangzhuoma 文昌卓玛 (bun khrang sgrol ma བུན་ཁང་སྒྲོལ་མ།)

Wenge 文革

X

xian 先 (byams བྱམས།)

Xiawu 夏吾 (sha bo ཤ་བོ།)

Xiawucairang 夏吾才让 (sha bo tshe ring ཤ་བོ་ཚེ་རིང་།)

Xiawudongzhu 夏吾东主 (sha bo don grub ཤ་བོ་དོན་གྲུབ།)

Xiawuji 夏吾吉 (sha bo skyid ཤ་བོ་སྐྱིད།)

Xiawuzhuoma 夏吾卓玛 (sha bo sgrol ma ཤ་བོ་སྒྲོལ་མ།)

Xiluo 西洛 (shi log ཤི་ལོག་།)

Xingfu 幸福 (bde skyid བདེ་སྐྱིད།)

Xingqier 星期二 (gza' mig dmar གཟའ་མིག་དམར།)

Xingqiliu 星期六 (gza' spen pa གཟའ་མཇུག་པ།)

Xizang shifan zhuanke xuexiao 西藏师范专科学校

Y

yag ཡག

Yangjin 央金 (dbyangs can དབྱངས་ཅན།)

Yang 央 (g.yang གཡང་།)

ye shes ཡེ་ཤེས།

ye shes mtsho ཡེ་ཤེས་མཚོ།

ye shes rgya mtsho ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

yul lha tshe ring ཡུལ་ལྷ་ཚེ་རིང་།

yul shul ཡུལ་སུལ།

Z

Zhandou 战斗

Zhen 珍 (sgron ལྷོན།)

zhi'u ཞི་འུ (Xiewu 歇武)

Zhuoma 卓玛 (sgrol ma ལྷོ་ལ་མ།)

Zhwa dmar ཞ་དམར།

Zi ling ཞི་ལིང་།

zla ba ལྷ་བ།

Zong 宗 ('dzoms འཛོམས།)